

Memorandum on Streamlining the Granting of Waivers

April 21, 1998

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Streamlining the Granting of Waivers

Five years ago, the Vice President asked you to create reinvention laboratories in your departments and agencies and to streamline the granting of waivers of internal agency rules within them so the laboratories could more effectively promote innovation. These waivers—delegations of authority to deviate from existing internal agency policies and procedures—are often sought by front-line employees who are trying to make their operations work better, cost less, and get results that Americans care about. The Vice President and I emphasized such measures in the Blair House Papers last year, when we encouraged you to delegate more power to front-line employees to unlock the enormous potential of the Federal workforce.

Your departments and agencies have responded, and Federal employees have used waivers to facilitate innovation and provide excellent customer service. For example, the Coast Guard marine safety programs have increased managerial flexibility for field commanders to waive unnecessary requirements that had previously accounted for over one-half million work hours annually. The Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service's Tort Claims Adjudication Team used a waiver to reduce the processing time for tort claims of less than \$2,500 from 51 days to 8.

Based on these experiences, I am directing you, where you determine that it is appropriate, to adopt some of the best practices developed by agencies. These best practices include the following characteristics:

1. Waiver requests are acted upon within 30 days or less. After 30 days, the originating entity within the agency can assume approval and implement the requested waiver.
2. Those officials having authority to grant or change internal agency rules can approve waiver requests, but only

the head of an agency can deny a waiver request.

3. Officials who have the authority to grant waivers are encouraged to identify potential waiver opportunities and extend waivers to their own agencies.

The Vice President's team at the National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) is ready to assist you in developing a waiver process based upon lessons learned and best practices from agencies that have experience with waivers. Some of you already have this type of waiver process in place for reinvention laboratories. I direct you to take every opportunity to extend this process throughout your agency.

You should report to the Vice President on actions taken to implement this memorandum by July 1, 1998.

This memorandum does not apply to waiver requests by grant program recipients nor does it apply to the granting of waivers to statutory requirements or practices required by law. It applies to those internal agency rules not codified in the Code of Federal Regulations.

William J. Clinton

Remarks on Earth Day in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia

April 22, 1998

Thank you very much. Thank you for the welcome. I want to especially welcome all the young children and not-so-young children and all of you who feel childlike, even though you're not anymore, to this wonderful American celebration of Earth Day.

I thank the Vice President for his steadfast, constant, and brilliant leadership to preserve our environment for future generations. I thank Congressman Bob Wise, who has been a good friend and an adviser and represents you so well. I want to thank our National Park superintendent, Bob Stanton. You know, I was sitting with Bob, and I said, "You know something, you've got the best job in the whole Federal Government." And he said, "I know, and they're foolish enough to pay me to do it every day." [*Laughter*]

Mayor Stowell, thank you. Pam Underhill, thank you for your work at the Appalachian